



DEVOTED TO POLITE LITERATURE SUCH AS MORAL AND SENTIMENTAL TALES, ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS, BIOGRAPHY, TRAVELING SKETCHES, AMUSING MISCELLANY, HUMOROUS AND HISTORICAL ANECDOTES, SUMMARY, POETRY, &c.

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SELECT TALES.

From the East India Sketch Book.

The Sick Certificate.

It was towards the close of a day in August, and the sun was going down dimly and gloomily. The sea was white, pale, and death-like, as it lay quietly under the heavy clouds that girdled the horizon, forming the sea-bank, portentous of storm and wind. The air was damp and heavy, and the eye turning landwards was still impressed by sad images—by bare and rocky hills, whose summits were half hidden in the curling mist—by masses of trees, mangoes, cocoas palmiras, and plantains, whose pleasant green, gloomed through that dim and twilight atmosphere like melancholy grey. No rain had fallen through the day. It was one of those breaks in the monsoon when the sufferer actually seems to inhale steam, and when every breathing of the invalid appears to gasp for life. Not a breeze to pass over the throbbing temples or to wave the slightest leaf that ever hung on tree or shrub! It seemed to the drooping energies of the pale beings who were gazing on the scene, as if the pulse of creation had stopped.

There were two persons looking out alternately upon the land and the sea with feelings of the most painful interest—a husband and a wife. The former was evidently suffering from some severe malady; the cheek of the latter was as pallid as his own, and her eye, if its glance were somewhat less leaden, was still shaded by an anxiety which words never express. His hand was clasped in hers and his head rested against her bosom as she stood with her arm encircling his neck; and they seemed, sufferers as they were, not to be wholly without comfort, as they clung together thus lovingly.

Their silence had continued for some time, for their hearts were filled with thoughts to which neither cared to give utterance. At length Capt. Darnley, for so he was called, drawing the beloved form on which he leaned still more closely to him asked her, "And

you do not think I improve much then—do you Anne, dearest?"

"A little, dear, a little, I hope and trust," replied the wife soothingly, willing to impart the comfort she required and had not! "You know your appearance never changes *very* much, and—"

"Oh, Anne, Anne, but it *does* change, my darling girl. Look at this vest! it is not so long since it fitted me so closely—and the sleeves—and—alas, am I *not* changed?"

"Oh, thinner, to be sure. You know in this country how soon one is pulled down! And the recovery is always so slow. One can scarcely see any improvement; though in fact one *is* improving, dear. Now *do* be cheered my own dear husband! Let us think how happy we shall be in sweet, beautiful, beloved England; how soon we hope to be there. Is it not quite delightful, Darnley?"

"Oh, yes, yes, it *is* delightful, if we were *sure*! Tell me again what Thompson said."

"He said, 'India will not do for Darnley, he must go home;' and then he asked *me* if I should like it; and need I tell you my dear how frankly and how cordially, and rapturously I answered 'Yes, yes, yes,' a hundred times? And his words were, 'We must send him then.' I could only exclaim, 'Without delay! without delay!' And off he went, promising to come again this evening."

"It is getting late, I wish he would come. Why does he not give me the certificate at once?"

"Oh, but after what he has said, there cannot be a shadow of a doubt on the matter, you know, dear George. An officer's word is so sacred—and a professional man too—of that profession, moreover, which so imperiously requires of its practitioners the greatest honor and rectitude and good feeling! Oh, I cannot for an instant think that he would fail us. It is impossible."

"Heaven bless you for that hope, my dearest; and might I feel it too, if—" The appearance of the person to whom he was referring interrupted the sentence.

Doctor Thompson was the medical officer

of Darnley's regiment. In the east, every professional man is called 'doctor' by courtesy; or rather *was*, for in our days the influence of the schoolmaster, is in some unimportant details, reaching to this *ultima thule* of civilization.

Mr. Assistant-Surgeon Thompson, for such was his *bona fide* style and title, was a short, thick, bluff looking parsonage, about thirty years old, with a pair of prominent, lack-luster red eyes, sleek black hair, hanging straight, lanky, and damp, over his forehead, and leaving on the collar of his jacket evident indications of its too great lengthiness. Over his burley-looking face an expression of great meekness and loving kindness was superinduced, and it was not, until after two or three interviews that you detected in the oblique, lateral glances of his eyes, a sentiment which could be translated only into a looking out keenly after his own interest. He had the character of being a very inoffensive man. He had such a conviction of the infallibility of the commanding officer for the time being as befitted a person of his humble temper, which did not permit him to place his own judgment in competition with that of his superiors. He was fortunate in discovering the good qualities of any officer who happened to have influential connections and commendably prudent in eschewing the society of such refractory youths as ventured to canvass the doings of their betters—conducting himself altogether with a laudable discretion amongst the promiscuous society of the mess table, avoiding any intermeddling with the opinions and assertions commonly ventured there.

Captain Darnley was *only* a gentleman by birth, education, and by *principle*. He had nothing beyond his pay, and those clinging relics of youthful folly—his debts. Moreover he had a young and accomplished wife; but as *home* was his object, he economized to the utmost, and to Mr. Assistant Surgeon Thompson's gently expressed surprise, saw little company, and gave no feuds.

He had no interest in India—no expectations from patronage. His relations, aristocratic

cratic as they were, had no Indian influence. Captain Darnley was, to add to his other misfortunes, a popular man with his corps generally, and as Lieutenant Colonel Bore, at that time commanding, was very much the reverse, it follows, of course, that Darnley was no favorite at head quarters, as another necessary consequence, none with Doctor Thompson, save and except a slight saving clause on the score of prospective contingencies.

To return to the hall of Captain Darnley's house.

'Bless my soul, Darnley!' said the professional gentleman, endeavoring to light up his face to an expression of delight.—'Why you are quite another man! I declare I should scarcely have known you, you look so amazingly better!'

'Then my looks sorely belie my feelings,' said Darnley, coldly, and as quietly as he could. 'I am *very* ill to-night, Thompson, and I wish you would give me something composing.'

'To be sure, my dear sir, to be sure,' returned Thompson, with great warmth of manner; 'we shall be able to manage that very easily, that is, if we find from the symptoms, you know—But I beg your pardon, Mrs. Darnley; upon my word I was so engrossed by Darnley's evident improvement, that I really did not see you. How do you find yourself this evening? You look poorly.'

'Oh, but I feel much better,' returned Mrs. Darnley. 'You know the progress of my disorder is greatly affected by the state of my mind. And since you declared your intention to send Captain Darnley home, I am beginning to feel quite strong in the hope of seeing dear England shortly.'

'True, true, to be sure; that is, if he requires it, you know; for I should be unwilling to send him away, except in a case of absolute necessity, for his own sake,' said Doctor Thompson smoothly. 'It adds so much to an officer's term of slavery! And really, if Darnley goes on in improving at this rate, I hope and believe that it will be needless.'

'Really now, doctor, you must excuse my disagreeing with you,' said Mrs. Darnley, who saw with a trembling heart, the shadow that was settling on her husband's brow. 'It is not many hours since you saw Captain Darnley, and how the improvement has occurred, or wherein it consists, I confess myself at a loss to discover. In short, my dear Doctor Thompson, I think the certificate quite as necessary now, as it was this morning; and I think, moreover, and I assure you I am a deeply interested observer, that it is probable it will not be less necessary a month hence, if you intend keeping us here so long.'

'I intend? My dear madam, I have no

intention in the matter but that of doing my duty; and that duty requires me to assure you, that *you*, at least, ought not to remain in India another day, if it could be avoided.'

'Go without my husband!' exclaimed Mrs. Darnley, in a tone and with a gesture of horror. 'Never, if death be the alternative.'

'Nevertheless, you *must* go, my dear Anne,' said her husband calmly.—'And as for me, we will talk about that some other time.'

'No, we will talk about it now, George,' returned Mrs. Darnley, collecting herself—'we will talk about it *now* as is more fitting and proper, where interests so dear to us both are at stake. And I will assure Doctor Thompson that he, as a married man, may be excused for imagining such treason against a woman's heart, as to believe the wife capable of leaving the sick husband in a climate so hostile. But *you*, Darnley, ought to deem better of me. However, doctor, let me tell you frankly, if you think it inconsistent with your duty to send Captain Darnley away, be it so;—do nothing against such convictions. Our alternative must be to procure leave to visit the presidency, and see whether the medical gentlemen there disagree with you—whence we shall call on you for a statement of Darnley's case, and your mode of treatment.'

'You take up my words too hastily, Mrs. Darnley,' said Dr. Thompson whose naturally red face glowed purple under the searching eye of the anxious wife. 'I did not say a sick certificate for Darnley would be absolutely unnecessary; but we must take time—and think about it—and in short, I dare say we shall be able to arrange matters very well—but do not let us be too hasty, nothing like deliberation, you know; hey, Captain Darnley! Oh! we shall do very well!'

Darnley turned from him, with ill concealed disgust. But the wife had greater self-command, and she once more repeated calmly the assurance, that if, on the morrow, Darnley showed no change of symptoms either Doctor Thompson must give the necessary certificate, or Darnley would forward an application to the army head-quarters for leave to visit the presidency forthwith.

'I trust Darnley *will* be better in the morning,' was Doctor Thompson's parting wish. 'At any rate, if he is not it will be time enough then to decide on sending him away. So good night, Darnley;—keep yourself up—good night, Mrs. Darnley;—take care of yourself and be *good-spirited*—*you* must go home at least.' And so he left them, hastening away to prevent reply.

The husband and wife turned their eyes on the countenance of each other, and read feelings and indignation, too deep for words.

They stood in sad silence for a few minutes, interrupted at length, by Captain Darnley's continuing the train of his thoughts and saying—'Well, Anne, was I deceived? Did I not tell you yonder man was *never* to be relied on, if permitted to escape for a moment from your own immediate observation?'

'He is a base, time-serving wretch,' exclaimed Mrs. Darnley with unusual warmth, in words wrung from her by the bitterness and suffering to which she knew full well they were exposed.—'But do not droop, dearest George, believe me we *will* go home, and—'

'At least *you* must, Anne, even this idiot can see the necessity of *your* remaining no longer in a climate like this.'

'Do not talk of parting, Darnley,' said his wife, earnestly, and in a manner almost solemn. 'I will never leave you; thy home shall be my home—and where thou liest, there will I also be buried.' And she burst into a passion of tears and long they wept in each other's arms.

When they looked up from that sad embrace, the dimness of the closing day had passed away. The full moon had risen, and was shining as it never shines beyond the tropics, with a splendor that brought out every object in strong relief. The sea lay beneath its rays, one broad sheet of silver, and the outline of the hills were traced in marked distinctness. The sweet fragrance of that shrub known familiarly in India as 'the Burmese creeper,' which threw its fairy boughs, hung with bells varying through all the shades from white to crimson, over an arched trellis-work, streamed into the hall through the open venetians, inviting the invalid to approach and enjoy the balmy breeze which its perfume enriched.

Arm-in-arm, Darnley and his wife passed into the garden. They walked some time in silence unbroken by any other communication than that occasional pressure of the hand which told whither their thoughts were turning. Darnley at length seemed fatigued and threw himself on the bench beneath the Burmese creeper.

'Is this safe, dear?' said the anxious wife, inhaling the air more freely, as if she wished to ascertain whether any vapors there could injure the frail frame of a being who was the whole world to her.

'There is not a particle of moisture abroad, my dearest,' said he. 'The sea breeze has sprung up, and it is so refreshing after this dismal day! Go and get your shawl, Anne, the breeze is almost cold; come back to me quickly.'

She left him, and Darnley restless and uneasy, rose to walk. He paced to the extremity of the avenue, and he paused to look

down on the sea, as the surf, beating more violently every moment, broke upon the rocks. Every wave was crested, and his heart throbbed strongly, as if to welcome the freshening breeze. He panted for his home. His very spirit was sickening as he saw the wife of his bosom fading under the influence of the tropical sun—drooping, notwithstanding her efforts to collect her energies. And he knew that to achieve this end there was but one visible means; and whether that was to be within his grasp or not, depended on the fiat of a man, whom, in his deepest soul, he despised with absolute loathing.

Louder than the dashing of the ocean the voice of his thoughts rose within him. But what sound can drown the faintest whisper of the human being who is the object of strong passion—whether of love or hate?

Above the roaring of the surge—above his own tumultuous feelings, Darnley at that instant caught the voice of Thompson.

With no consciousness of the moral bearing of the action, panting and breathless with strong emotion, he stood leaning against one of a group of mungosas. And as he listened, he heard words like these—

‘But, my dear Captain Ashton,’ expostulated Doctor Thompson—‘If you could have witnessed the violence of Mrs. ——— mention no names—safe plan you know—you would have been positively shocked. I assure you, upon my honor as a medical man her threats absolutely terrified me—and really—upon the whole, I think the best thing we can do will be to send them off instantler.’

‘Ruin—ruin—my good fellow,’ returned his companion, whom Darnley would instantly have recognized, if the address of Doctor Thompson had not already pointed him out. ‘To let Darnley once quit these shores without first getting fairly out of my way, will be actual destruction to my prospects.’

‘And then consider, Thompson, how much the corps will be benefitted by such a step. It is not my interests alone that are concerned. Look at the lieutenants, nay ensigns, of seven years standing! How are they looking out for Darnley, think you? No, no, Thompson, you owe it to us to keep him here until he is fairly sickened. In another month, he will be glad to go away on any terms. Let him *have* the certificate in Heaven’s name *conditionally*. And what matters it to him whether he be invalid or not? His expecting ever to arrive at the majority is absurd. He keeps others back without any earthly benefit to himself—Really, I think we are positively his best friends in forcing him to do that which every rational being must see well enough, he ought to have done long since.’

‘Well, of course, you know best,’ returned Doctor Thompson. ‘I wish to do every thing I can to please the regiment. And you know, Captain Ashton, the Zilla of Bopore will shortly be vacant and a word from you at the Adjutant General’s office—’

‘Will surely not be wanting,’ added Captain Ashton; and more he might have said, but Darnley’s phrenzy was no longer to be kept within bounds. Animated by the unnatural strength of passion, he cleared the hedge at one bound, and confronted the astounded pair. ‘Scoundrels and cowards!’ he gasped, and further utterance was suspended by ungovernable emotion.

In a moment Capt. Ashton saw his advantage, and regained his usual coolness. Perhaps he had not been thrown off his equilibrium three times in the course of his life. He was proverbially cool; calm beneath looks of contempt which did all but look daggers; calm beneath the general disgust that caused his presence to be shunned almost as a contagion; calm beneath whispered taunts and innuendoes that would have maddened a sensitive man, and have nerved to mortal combat any arm but that of a coward.

And at this moment he felt he had the lion in the toils. He saw with the eye of the practiced huntsman who watches the tiger he has just chafed—with such an eye Captain Ashton marked the pale, quivering lip—the distended nostril—the foam each breath drew forth from Darnley, and he knew well that he was utterly beyond self-command. The presence of Thompson was his own safe-guard, and also, for the cool soldier was collected enough to extend a very prospective view into the future, his best evidence in the crisis to which the maddened Darnley was surely hastening.

Therefore addressing himself to his victim he inquired deliberately, with the air of a man all-unconscious of aught base or wrong, to what he was indebted for the honor of Captain Darnley’s presence at so unexpected a moment, and in a manner so utterly unprecedented.

Such an address was to throw fuel on the flame. The rage of Darnley became every instant more violent, and his body shook strongly beneath the force of his tremendous passion.

‘Ashton,’ said he, with a voice hoarse but subdued into an unnatural and frightful calmness of tone, ‘I have ever deemed you a cold, calculating, selfish knave, who, beyond the sphere of your own vile interests, cared for nothing; loved nothing;—and I have avoided you accordingly, as all honest men avoid you. I know that for your own miserable advancement, you would be content to sacrifice the lives—the hopes of tens of thousands.’

‘Sir,’ replied Captain Ashton, ‘you may spare yourself the trouble of an harangue, and of the vain expenditure of an eloquence

which cannot but prove injurious to your constitution in its present enfeebled state. I request you to leave my premises, where you are an intruder—equally unwelcome and undesired.’

‘Now mark me Ashton,’ said Darnley in a louder voice, ‘If I live till this arm is once more nerved, I will call you to such an account for this as shall try the strength of your crafty soul. I know you, sir, now; I have overheard your project, and I trust the Almighty God will not allow prosperity to your foul villainy. You pursue your snake-like course, hidden beneath the shadow of others, but leaving your filthy slime on all you touch; but for once I have tracked your windings! And for your worthy coadjutor, I shall find a day for him too; albeit the stake of one honest man’s life is all too much to set against the polluted existence of two such wretched cowards and villains. Yes, Capt. Ashton note it well—mark it well; I tell you to your teeth you are a liar, coward, and scoundrel,’ and Darnley, still nerved by his phrenzy, left the compound as he had entered it.

The excitement lasted until Darnley had reached his couch. Then, when the moment of reaction came, faint, breathless, cold dews bursting from every pore, he lay in a state of infantine weakness, or of utter unconsciousness. There needed no busy messenger to tell his wife what had occurred. When she returned to seek Darnley, she heard his voice in altercation with Captain Ashton; and the very sight of his companion explained to her that he must have been the auditor of some irritation, and that his impetuosity had urged him instantly to seek their presence and tell them so.

It was a night of terrible anxiety to that devoted wife. The husband of her choice, the beloved of her youth, lay on his couch languid, exhausted, unconscious of her care insensible of her voice. Far from bringing them nearer the longed for period of their quitting India, this event, admitting it to have only the happiest results, must retard their departure. And she felt that, of Darnley’s ultimate recovery, an immediate change to the blessed air of his native shore, afforded the *single* hope. He had experienced no improvement even when all around was tranquillity; and how would he now endure the excitement necessarily attendant on the consequences of that action, which she well knew would be construed into a military offence?

But when she contemplated those consequences, her spirit did not fail; she almost wondered at the calmness and fortitude with which she regarded that which might probably entail on them utter ruin. She knew enough of the regulations of the service to be aware that admitting the case to be proved, there was but one sentence to be pronounced by a

court-martial animated by the most favorable feelings—dismissal. And then what would become of them, destitute as they were of resources? The very circumstance under which they would, in that case return to their native country, would wear an appearance of disgrace, which might afford some plea of justification for the coldness of friends, too willing, alas! to be cold when their friendship is most needed. Such a prospect was dreary enough, but as she afterwards confessed her heart was at that trying season strongly, *strangely* supported.

Long before the anticipated visit of the adjutant, Darnley had recovered consciousness, and even composure. His wife had heard, from his own lips the conversation between Ashton and Thompson, of which he had been an auditor, and her hopes gathered strength as she listened. Darnley did not for a moment attempt to conceal from her his conviction that the harshest proceedings would be immediately instituted, and she was satisfied when she knew the whole and her fortitude shrank not. He was more—he found comfort in *her* comfort.

'Always make me aware of the real nature of our position,' she was accustomed to say. 'God gave me to you as your friend and helpmate, and how can I be useful to you in either character, if half that I ought to know, is, from mistaken consideration, concealed from me? I might as well attempt to lead a person through a dangerous road blindfolded.'

This adjutant entered the hall with a most reluctant step. Darnley was lying on a couch, and Mrs. Darnley rose to receive their visitor.—She hastened to relieve him from his embarrassment, by assuring him of a welcome. 'We have expected you,' she said; 'you must do your duty, Mr. Percy, you are come for Darnley's sword.'

'Such is the painful office that has fallen to me in this unfortunate business,' replied Mr. Percy. 'Darnley, my good fellow, the whole regiment sympathizes with you, though we have heard nothing but what that disgusting Thompson has thought fit to insinuate. We are quite satisfied that you have had great provocation.'

Darnley and his wife together explained the whole matter. 'Precious pair!' said Mr. Percy, who had listened attentively. 'Do not be discouraged, Darnley; I don't apprehend any *ultimate* evil to yourself, whatever the immediate result may be. To tell you the truth, old Bore is perfectly delighted that he has been able to lay his hand on you. He and Ashton have been closeted ever since parade this morning, and the doctor was sent for previously to the breaking up of the conference.—They have framed the charges together, of course, and cleverly framed they are!'

There was the preamble as usual, 'for conduct unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman,' exhibited in three instances; first, in Darnley's having unwarrantably forced himself upon the presence of Capt. Ashton, by overleaping a fence which separated their respective compounds, and remaining there contrary to the express desire of Capt. Ashton; secondly, in having, at the same time and place, without any provocation, threatened Capt. Ashton with a challenge to fight a duel; and, thirdly, in having applied to him the terms, 'liar and coward,' with other violent and abusive language—the whole being in breach of the articles of war.

Such is an outline of the charges, which Darnley read over with a smile of pure, unmixed contempt. Not that he was blind to the fact of the necessary sentence that must follow their being proved; but he disdained with the deepest scorn, the magignant bitterness that had so striven for his ruin, and shrunk from encountering him where—bad and lamentable as the fact is—a soldier believes all *his* personal grievances ought to meet redress.

It would be idle to follow the thoughts of the suffering pair through all the mazes in which they deviated during the interval which necessarily intervened before the day of trial. In the all-absorbing-occupation of his mind, Darnley's bodily sickness was almost disregarded. True, he was feeble as a child; but the pains that had once tortured every limb, had for the present ceased, and so far he was in a state of comparative ease. If ever woman was what God designed her to be—a helpmate for man—Mrs. Darnley was that woman. Unwearied in her attention, untiring in her patience, she listened with steady ear to all the conjectures with which his sickly mind occupied itself; she aided his weakness, by her evident fortitude, she taught him resignation; and by the piety which was her support at all times, and *now* felt indeed as a rock of defence, she was enabled to trust Him 'who tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb,' and to contemplate the future without despair.

And she had much to occupy her. There was one solitary point in which she could ask counsel of none but her own bosom; and long and frequent were her communings with that counsellor. To open to Darnley the secret with which her thoughts were occupied, would but inflict on him an anxiety ten-fold more cruel than her own. Therefore, after much consideration—after bringing every faculty of her mind to bear upon the subject—after having devoutly and humbly sought guidance and light from 'the Fountain of all wisdom,' she took courage, and did boldly that which she believed her highest duties called on her to do.

Before the charges against Darnley were returned from the adjutant-general's office, to his regimental head-quarters, a simple but copious statement of his case had been privately conveyed to one who, whatever might be the fiat of the court-martial, had the approval or disapproval of it in his power. The statement took a retrospective view of the dreadful state of bodily suffering to which Capt. Darnley had for so many months been a prey; it went on to record various instances of annoyance on the part of Capt. Ashton, which, though too skillfully contrived to be tangible, were not the less likely to irritate a high feeling man, who was conscious of their design, and writhed beneath their effects. It asserted also, the hostility of Col. Bore, his close alliance with Capt. Ashton, and certain occurrences in which nothing but Capt. Darnley's interference had prevented the grossest violation of all discipline. It revealed the system under which Dr. Thompson had acted—that, alarmed by the evident danger of Darnley, he had volunteered to give him a sick certificate to England; that, so far from improving, Capt. Darnley had daily become worse up to the very evening when the events occurred on which the charges preferred against him had been framed. It disclosed the tergiversation manifested on that evening by Doctor Thompson, which had naturally tended to irritate Capt. Darnley to excess. It then went on to relate without comment, verbatim, the conversation overheard by Darnley between Capt. Ashton and Dr. Thompson, when Darnley, irritated to phrenzy by such palpable demonstrations of the evil influence that was at work against him, was impelled to that unfortunate violence which had reduced him to his present dangerous predicament.

'If the opinion of a man's fellows,' thus it concluded, 'be satisfactory evidence of his character, then let all of Darnley's brother officers be called on to bear record. Ask of them if he be not of courage as noble as ever animated the pulse of officer and gentleman, yet of heart gentle to the lowest and weakest? Ask of them whether his integrity stands not on so proud a basis, that his word alone is sufficient to authenticate any fact for which he pledges it? Ask of them whether, although he insists on subordination to the utmost, he be not the unwearied friend of every soldier under him; and patient investigator of their claims; the merciful instructor of their ignorance? the most honorable gentleman, the most upright man, the truest of friends, the most indulgent of masters, and ah! tenderest of husbands! What mighty provocation must that have been which could rouse so brave and gentle a spirit to the commission of the violence of which he stands accused? And what, after all, was that violence? Exists there a man, who, under such an out-

rage, would have done less than brand the perpetrators of it with names such as well befitted them? Were they less dark than he charged them with being? And although, to repel such charges, men of honor hourly peril their lives, with the offence of provoking them to such an act he cannot be charged; for his accusers have borne more than this, and still they and their enemies remain unscathed! They have borne the withering sarcasm, and the bitter taunt, until it has become familiar to their ears; and the first wound they have affected to feel on their honor, has been inflicted at the precise moment when they had the power to screen themselves behind the military law, and vindicate their injured reputation by bringing ruin on their opponent, for that which, after all, amounts to nothing more than a breach of military etiquette!"

The day of trial arrived and Darnley, the prisoner, was carried from his palanquin into the presence of the court. Worn and attenuated as he was, pallid and changed, his calm and composed eye bore evidence that all was peace within. Many a one of the members of the court looked on him with pity and respect. Darnley was so well known for all that soldiers love as brightest and best, and the circumstances of his case came home to men's business and bosoms, that it must be avowed the convocation was hardly prepared to consider the facts impartially. Capt. Ashton, moreover, was what is technically called in the army a marked man; a party he had indeed, for he had interest; and time-servers and sycophants, the servile and selfish, are to be found every where. But it had been emphatically observed of him, by one well calculated to judge, 'He had brothers and sisters, kinsmen and wife, but he was the friend of no man, and no man was his friend.' Men felt that they could have no sympathy with one who stood aloof from them in cold solitariness; and whether he were loved or respected the least it might have embarrassed the profoundest metaphysician to determine.

It is not intended in this place to paint all the forms of the proceedings. The Judge Advocate-general was a man well skilled in all the routine of his department, and every thing, as might be expected, was regular even to the letter. The trial occupied but a few hours. Darnley's defence was read by the judge-advocate, and the sensation with which it was received, proved the force of the manly plainness with which the facts were recorded as they stood. The court adjourned till the following day, when they again assembled to record the sentence, and witness the signing and sealing of the proceedings.

When the trial was absolutely finished—when Darnley knew his fate so far was decided, he resigned himself to patient expecta-

tion of the return of the commander-in-chief. He felt that if he had hazarded the provision for his own existence—and for that of his wife, far dearer to him than life—he had now done his utmost to redeem his error. Sometimes, although he felt that his patience had been tried beyond the limits of man's endurance, he looked on the pale cheek of that beloved being once so fair, and repented in bitterness that he had given his enemy this advantage over him. But the voice of her consolation, always ready to minister to his wounds, soothed the anguish of his remorse, and awakened him to hope. Yes—to a higher and better hope than any this frail world, with all its glory and pageantry can bestow—even to that hope from which she had gathered strength to support her, when the poor body that enshrined the spirit seemed debilitated to that pitiable weakness for which there is rest only in the grave.

The proceedings returned, and a division order commanded the attendance of the general staff of the commanding officers and staff of the station, and the commanding officer, staff, and all other European commissioned officers of Darnley's regiment, at 11 o'clock, A. M. on the following morning. The whole place was in commotion. Horses, buggies, palanquins, all were put in requisition; and there was the hurrying to and fro as of men bent on an important object—after all, the inquiry perhaps of the Athenians, 'Is there any new thing?'—Whispers began to be in circulation, emanating from somebody who had been fortunate enough to obtain a sight of the important despatches. In short, many hearts beat more strongly than those of the sick prisoner and his wife; and other breasts, perhaps, trembled with more fearful apprehensions than those of that afflicted pair.

On the following day, all who had been summoned attended at the head quarters of the division. There was a splendid display of the 'pomp and circumstance' of military decoration. There was the scarlet, and the gold and the embroidery; and the rattling of swords and spurred heels; and the glitter of helmets with their waving plumes. And Darnley was there too, arrayed in his gorgeous trappings, but without that sword which had done so much good service against the foes of his country—without that sword which was perhaps to be restored to him no more.

The finding of the court was read, pronouncing him guilty of every instance of the charge, save and except the words in the preamble, describing his conduct as 'unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman,' and also the words 'without provocation,' in the second instance. The sentence of course was dismissal, but 'under the circumstances of the case,' the document went on to state, 'the court felt justified in earnest-

ly recommending the prisoner to the merciful consideration of his excellency. They begged respectfully to call the attention of his excellency to the long and painful illness under which Capt. Darnley had previously been laboring—an illness which, up to the present moment, exerted its distressing influence—an illness which his own medical attendant had pronounced incurable in this country, and as a remedy for which, that very medical attendant, assistant surgeon Thompson, had himself prescribed a return to Europe. The court begged strongly to remark on the evidence given by that officer, being as he was the single witness subpoenaed in support of the prosecution: also on the framing of the charge, which had been so constructed as to remove from assistant surgeon Thompson the appearance of being one of the parties against whom Capt. Darnley's unfortunately violent expressions had been directed. The court having evidence to the fact, which indeed the prisoner had not denied, were bound by their oath to find him 'guilty,' and record dismissal accordingly. But viewing the aggravated nature of the provocation—being no less than a conviction that he had been deluded in the hopes extended by the very man who had appeared on his trial as evidence against him—the court felt it their high and imperative duty, earnestly to repeat their recommendation of Captain Darnley to the most favorable consideration of his excellency the Commander-in-Chief, that a valuable and greatly respected officer, might not be lost to the company's service, for an offence which, grave as it might be in its military character, involved not the slightest taint of moral turpitude. The court therefore, relying on the known, &c. &c.

And then came the remarks of the Commander-in-Chief, commencing, according to the formal routine, with his excellency's disapproval. The very finding, it said, ought to have guided the court to pronounce a less severe punishment, since they had exonerated the prisoner from 'conduct unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman,' and had also founded their recommendation of his case to the favorable consideration of his excellency, on the grounds of the extreme provocation that had led Captain Darnley to so violent an expression of his feelings, as had unfortunately placed him in jeopardy. Much as the Commander-in-Chief lamented the intemperance of which Captain Darnley had been guilty, his excellency concurred with the court in pronouncing the provocation extreme; indeed he had satisfaction in bearing his testimony to its being altogether unprecedented in the course of his experience. He congratulated Captain Darnley on the almost unanimous testimony his brother officers had so nobly borne to his high and un-

impeachable integrity. The Commander-in-Chief expressed his satisfaction in being able to restore to their fellowship an officer so greatly, and, as far as he could be guided by the records now submitted to him, so deservedly beloved. He directed in conclusion, that Captain Darnley should be released from arrest, and return to his duty forthwith.

Scarcely did the impatient audience allow the sonorous voice of the assistant adjutant general to subside into its concluding pause, before, forgetful of the etiquette of the meeting, hands were extended to grasp Darnley's, and eyes were beaming with congratulation and delight, and whispered praises were hailing his restoration to his proper place. The lips of many a brave man trembled then, with emotions such as sterner natures blush to display; and poor Darnley, weak in body, overwhelmed with the sudden rush of feelings, with the unutterable zeal of the fiery spirits of his band of devoted friends, oppressed by the effusion of friendship and applause that would not be restrained, covered his face and wept aloud.

The meeting dissolved, and surrounded by a gallant cavalcade, the palanquin of Darnley passed swiftly down the line of the cantonment.—They arrived at his door, and his happy friends parted with him there, for they knew well *who* was awaiting with fear and trembling within his home.

It was a moment of deep joy. Darnley felt that its peculiar character singled out from all other moments of his life, when he clasped in his arms the being who had been saved from utter destitution, and who now, looking in his face, exclaimed, 'tell me nothing—I read it all *there*. You are acquitted and triumphant; I am sure you are.'

And he confirmed the blissful assurance, and detailed, so far as his agitation would permit, the occurrences of the morning. And he tasted yet another honey drop in the cup of that day's bliss; for he learned then for the first time, the effort on which she, in the depth of her wife like devotion, had ventured, unassisted by advice or influence; and he rejoiced the more, to think that, in part, at least, he owed the preservation of his professional reputation to the firmness of the gentlest being that ever smoothed the pillow of sickness.

In the division orders of that day, there appeared an extract from the general orders, removing Colonel Bore from the command of Darnley's regiment; and, almost at the same hour, Mr. Percy visited the happy pair, to notify them that Ashton and Thompson had both been placed in arrest, and that charges against them, framed at the Presidency had actually arrived by the very aid which conveyed Darnley's acquittal.

That was a day of loud revelry at the mess.

It was not what was called a public day, but every officer brought so many friends with him, that it seemed as if the whole cantonment had gathered there to celebrate a festival. Many a health was quaffed to Darnley and his wife, and loud and long were the encomiums lavished on them. *They* enjoyed a deeper and holier thankfulness in the quiet of their own home—as happy in their prosperity, as they had been resigned under their trial.

Darnley went to the presidency so soon as his evidence had been given on the trials of Captain Ashton and Doctor Thompson. Indeed their conspiracy had already been sufficiently proved in the former investigation, and form only rendered the repetition of it necessary. Darnley felt no triumph when he knew his adversaries were disgraced and ruined. The moment of their own restoration to happiness had been that of forgiveness. And very shortly, India, with all its train of sorrow and suffering, and gaudy misery, where life is a skeleton dressed in glittering robes, became to them as a land viewed in the visions of the night. For Darnley at the presidency procured the certificate that enabled him to return to his father-land, and he quitted it no more. By representations in the proper quarter, and the kindness of a friend, he realized an income abundantly sufficient to afford him and the beloved of his heart every comfort, and some few of the luxuries that tempted their moderate wishes. In one of the southern counties near the sea, stands his rose covered home, the cynosure to which many an Indian wanderer's eye has been turned, and where hospitality has never cheated the expectations of those whose past kindness gave them the slightest claim to seek it.

MISCELLANY.

Recollections of a Portrait Painter.

'THE FAMILY PICTURE.'

It was a lovely morning, and the calm of the country slept deliciously around, when I arrived at the ancient and stately home of my best and earliest patron. Descended from a long line of knightly ancestors, Sir Robert V— was, in the noblest sense of the appellation, a 'good old English gentleman!' for, to the hospitality and frankness which belonged to that honored name, he added the knowledge of a man of the world, and the refinement of a man of taste. It was the wish of Sir Robert that I should paint him a 'family picture;' and as with graceful pride Lady V— introduced me to her children, I felt that imagination could not have pictured a more exquisite beauty than that which I beheld, and which, in its varied forms, made them the loveliest group I had ever seen. One only differed in character and expression sufficiently to call for

an observation; it was the orphan nephew of Lady V—.

The hours which I passed in the midst of that happy family are amongst the brightest of my life, and when at length my picture was completed, it was with feelings of sincere regret that I left a spot where sorrow and discord seemed unknown, even in name.

Little did I dream of the realities that were soon to change that vision—the young and beautiful beings who were blooming on my canvass. Their gentle mother first fell a sacrifice to the fearful scourge which had made young Edward D— an orphan! The rich warm blood which mantled on the cheek of the eldest boy soon dyed the crimson fields of Spain, and his dark flashing eyes closed amid shouts of victory! The rest—all, but one—ere long sank beneath the fatal summoner which had deprived them of a mother; theirs was the panting breath, the fevered lip, the gradual decline, which only can bestow the beaming eyes and flushing cheeks, so beautiful—in death.

One, whose calm and thoughtful face seemed to proclaim that even in early youth the spirit was *not* of this world, sank as he was reaping the first fruits of a genius too mighty for his slender frame.

One was called from the triumphs of a first season to exchange its sweet sound for silence—its brightness for a shroud—love for the grave!

Another * * * * but it matters not, all died, as I have said, save one, the youngest and the loveliest! Her father strove to live—for her—but even this very anxiety might have hastened on another fate; and mourners, 'in deed and in truth,' shortly after bore the broken hearted Sir Robert to his tomb!

During the fearful sorrows of my beloved patron I had been laboring on, and had only heard, at their most sad conclusion, that the young Helen V— was heiress to her father's wealth; a small portion only having passed with the title to a distant relation.

Years passed away, and I mixed much in the gay world, for I had won that which is courted and flattered by the great—a name.

One night I was standing amidst the gay crowds assembled at the Duchess of —'s seeking an artist's inspiration in the fair faces before me, when, familiarised as I am with beauty, I was struck by one 'bright particular star,' standing near a vase filled with flowers; she had turned away from a crowd of admirers to address a young and elegant looking man, whose pale cheek flushed as her eyes met his.

Tall, and slightly formed, every look and movement was grace;—the dark *deep* eyes, so beautiful in their pure brightness, the cheek, whose rich tint came and went at every word, the fascination of her exquisite smile,

but more than all, a something which seemed like the memory of some half-forgotten dream, induced me to ask her name.

'Not know her? the beauty! the heiress—Helen V——!' was the astonished answer.

Delighted, yet sorrowing over the past—I procured an introduction, and she welcomed me as the friend of her father. For some moments we conversed upon indifferent subjects, when suddenly turning round, she said,

'You must allow me to present to you my cousin Edward D——; he is altered—since he—since you'—she hesitated—'since those happy days.'

She stopped; and as her thoughts flew back to the 'Family Picture,' and her now deserted home, her bright face was clouded by the deepest sorrow.

From that time I frequently met her, and found her cousin at her side; but it grieved me to remark that, by his wasting frame and brightening eye, he too, seemed to be a 'stricken deer.'

One day he came to my study—and slowly and sadly did he tell me that he had been ordered to Madeira, as a 'last chance, a forlorn hope;' and that he wished his picture 'to be to his lovely cousin a frail memorial of one who had loved her from her earliest childhood.'

As I sketched the traits of the young and gallant Edward D——, I felt that, if consumption is *sad* in women, it is far more fearful, when its death-grasp is laid on the 'strong man.'

That picture sealed the fate of Helen V——.

What passed when it was given I know not, but Helen, the beautiful and the heiress, left her bright orbit, left her home, though one of wealth and of pride, to sooth the last hours, to pillow the dying head of her cousin!

For a long time she, too, hovered on the brink of the lonely and distant grave, to which she had consigned her husband; but youth prevailed in the long struggle; and, recovering by slow degrees, she returned to England; and she now dwells in her father's halls—in silence and in solitude—a mourner and a widow.

The 'Family Picture' alone remains to tell what once *has* been; and when, in her hours of sorrow, she looks upon the bright faces still smiling *there*—how must she feel!—alone.

Mutability of Fortune.

OCCURRENCE IN IRELAND.

A DISTRESSED boy met a gentleman on horseback, of whom he asked a shilling for the purpose of purchasing some school article of which he was in need, for he was what is called a poor scholar. The gentleman told him he would if he could tell him what God

was then doing.—Whereupon the boy replied that 'he was turning a wheel, and that those who were up this year would be down perhaps, the next!' The gentleman pleased with his reply, gave him the shilling and rode off. Several years after this circumstance took place, a clergyman preached a charity sermon, the collection of which was to be appropriated to the aid of the parish.—After service, those persons for whom the proceeds of the sermon was intended, collected before the door of the vestry to receive their respective shares. One old man stretched out his hand to receive his complement, but was refused. He tried again, but met with no better success.—He was unable to account for this apparently strange conduct; however, he remained until all the rest had got their portion, and had went away, when the clerk informed him that the clergyman wished to speak with him. Accordingly he was ushered into the presence of the clergyman who asked the old man if he knew him, and was answered in the negative.—He was asked if he did not recollect once meeting a poor boor boy on the road, who requested a shilling of him—that he told him that he would give him one providing 'he could tell what God was then doing, and the boy told him he was turning a wheel. After pausing sometime, the old man said with a sigh, 'Ah, yes I do; I remember, and I have found the boy's words to have been true, for I was then *up*, and am now *down*.' 'Well,' said the clergyman, 'the boy to whom you then gave the shilling to, is the man who now speaks to you, and who is able and willing to relieve you in his turn.' The clergyman then made him an offer to come and live in his house, which was gratefully accepted by the old man.

The Present and the Future.

OUR minds should often dwell on the instructive truth, that every object in this life is unenduring. We should be prepared to part with them, or to withdraw from them, at God's pleasure. Families must separate. The fondest ties must be dissolved. The endearing sympathies of friendship and affection have no pledge of perpetuity, even while here. Estrangement will sometimes intrude, and, like the serpent in the garden, poison many an earthly paradise, that seemed designed to be the home of lasting pleasures. Yes all below that can allure our eyes, or kindle our imagination, is short lived. It is our wisdom, therefore, to set lightly by the world, and by God's grace to estimate its smiles and frowns, according to the holy oracles, and in the balance of the sanctuary. If our devout trust reposes on the bosom of our Saviour, we may complacently bear all on earth for his sake, be comforted amid the instabilities of life, and in the prospect of a

tearless, sighless, painless world of immortality and glory, breathe the devout spirit, and depart with the triumphant emotions of *those who die in the Lord*.

French Women.

THERE is a facility of amusement about the French quite unenjoyable by the English, and inconceivable to them. Our ideas of good fellowship and society are substantial; we like to be excited and entertained highly when we come together; but to be dressed, and to go out, and to chat, is enough for the Parisian dame! she looks neither for feasting, nor wit, nor yet for any intellectual intercourse! she will dress in all her jewels to appear at her friend's *soiree*, when she and all the company will feel themselves sufficiently amused by a child set to dance, or to prate with naivete: this, with a sorbet or an ice contents her; she is the most amuseable being in life. Not so the English woman; and one, I believe, cannot be found disinterested, and at the same time experienced on the point, that would not pronounce the choicest French society a bore.—*England in Italy*.

Great Odds.

'Ye'll nae ha'e sae meikle sma' siller as would break a note?' said a woman to a retailer in Newburgh. 'I canna just say,' returned the dealer, turning the key of his till, 'but I'll look an' see;'—after having counted the money, he put it down;—'Weel,' remarked the woman, searching her pocket; 'is na that unco funny o'me to come and forget the note? but that mak's nae odds, for I'se come or sen' it t'ye the morn.' 'Odds,' replied the dealer in sundries, hurling the silver and copper promiscuously into the till, 'odds! my faith, but it mak's a' the odds in the world.'—*Dundee Advocate*.

'SIRE, *one word*,' said a soldier one day to Frederick the Great, when presenting to him a request of a brevet lieutenant; 'If you say *two*,' answered the prince, 'I will have you hanged.' 'Sign,' replied the soldier. The monarch, surprised at his presence of mind, immediately granted the request.

Letters Containing Remittances.

Received at this Office, ending Wednesday last, deducting the amount of Postage paid.

T. T. Quaker Spring, N. Y. \$7.00; F. M. H. Clatsenbury, Ct. \$1.00; W. A. W. Hoosick Falls, N. Y. \$1.00; A. V. Little Falls, N. Y. \$10.00; E. C. Cooperstown, N. Y. \$2.00; A. H. M. Troy, N. Y. \$1.00; G. S. A. Watervliet, N. Y. \$1.00; S. M. Zanesville, O. \$1.00; H. S. A. Canaan, Center, N. Y. \$2.00.

DIED.

In this city, on the 5th inst. Mrs. Cathalina Stow, in the 37th year of her age.

On Tuesday the 16th inst. Eunice Coffin, widow of the late Stephen Coffin, in the 83d year of her age.

On the 15th inst. Mrs. Mary Carpenter, wife of Mr. William A. Carpenter, in the 25th year of her age.

On the 14th inst. Mrs. Hannah A. Morrison, wife of Casper V. H. Morrison, in the 30th year of her age.

On the 8th inst. Mr. David Crumby, in his 60th year.

On the 27th ult. Sally Ann, wife of Mr. Silas Sprague, in the 38th year of her age.



SELECT POETRY.

The Dead Mother and Sleeping Child.

BY THOMAS CAMBRIDGE JONES.

A YOUNG woman, with her child, not more than a year old, called at the house of a farmer, and modestly craved a lodging for the night.—Her speech, manner, and appearance indicated that she had seen better days—that hers was no common misery. Early on the morrow the child was heard crying, and the farmer's daughter entering the room of the wanderer, the babe lay reposing on its face fast asleep—but its mother was dead!—*Newspaper paragraph.*

THEY knew not whence she came—she craved
A lodging for the night—
A shelter for herself and child,
Until the morrow's light
Once more o'er vale and mountain lay,
That she might trace her lonely way.

THEY knew not where her home, nor who
The wanderer might be;—
She seemed abandoned by the world;
Perchance no home had she,
A lover's scorn—a father's rage,
Might have urged her wretched pilgrimage!

No matter from what cause she roamed,—
No matter for what end,—
In woe a friend proves stranger oft,
A stranger oft a friend.
The mother and her infant bland
Are welcomed by a stranger's hand.

Night wears away—the sleeping child
Clings to its mother's breast!
Oh! who can utter half the thoughts
Which breaks the mother's rest?
She sleeps not—though her babe is sleeping;
A change—she sleeps!—her babe is weeping.

The babe hath ceased to weep. The lark
Upspringing greets the morn!
There's music in the blessed woods—
Earth seems as newly born.
Approach the wanderer's quiet bed,
The babe's asleep—the mother, dead!

He Came too Late.

BY MISS ELIZABETH BOGART.

HE came too late! Neglect had tried
Her constancy too long;
Her love had yielded to her pride,
And the deep sense of wrong.
She scorned the offering of a heart
Which lingered on its way,
Till it could no delight impart,
Nor spread one cheering ray.

HE came too late! At once he felt
That all his power was o'er;
Indifference in her calm smile dwelt—
She thought of him no more.
Anger and grief had passed away,
Her heart and thoughts were free;
She met him, and her words were gay—
No spell had memory.

HE came too late! The subtle chords
Of love were all unbound;
Not by offence of spoken words,
But by the slights that wound.

She knew that life held nothing now
That could the past repay,
Yet she disdained his tardy vow,
And coldly turned away.
He came too late! Her countless dreams
Of hope had long since flown;
No charms dwelt in his chosen themes,
Nor in his whispered tone.
And when, with word and smile, he tried
Affection still to prove,
She nerved her heart with woman's pride,
And spurned his fickle love.

The Rose of May.

I SAID the flower-would bloom no more,
That wither'd yesterday;
That morning dews would ne'er restore
My lovely rose of May.
The future was too cold a thing
In my sweet dream to be—
The present rose, the present spring,
Are all of life to me.

I do remember well my grief,
When died my flower—and then
My joy, when time brought, leaf by leaf,
As sweet a flower again,
And then I said, 'Farewell, despair!
Thou art no guest for me;
Whate'er I lose of bright or fair,
I hope again to see.'
Alas! I've often wept since then,
And Death has robbed my bowers
But e'en amidst the grief of men,
I've comfort found in flowers;
For, if the bloom of love be brief,
And if fame's crown be riven,
I would not mourn life's fading leaf,
But look for spring in heaven.

The Neglected Boy to his Mother.

THERE was a time when all was joy,
And gladness overspread thy face,
You'd call me then your 'darling boy,'
And clasp me in your fond embrace.

'Tis not so now—for when we meet
A sadness seems to reign,
And should a smile obtrude to greet,
'Tis chased away again.

Why is it so? I cannot tell—
'This heart is true as ever,
Though I am forced to say 'farewell,'
For shortly we must sever.

Mother—before my father died
I've often heard you say
I was your *all*, your only pride,
When he was far away.

Then, when he slumbers in the tomb,
Why look so cold on me?
Why am I now not welcomed home.
As once I was by thee?

Mother—one word before we part—
'Tis this I'd have you know:
I hate thy husband from my heart—
He was my father's foe!

Cling not to Earth.

CLING not to earth—there's nothing there,
How ever loved—however fair,
But on its features still must wear
The impress of mortality.

The voyager on the boundless deep,
Within his barque may smile or sleep;

But bear him on—he will not weep
To leave its wild uncertainty.

Cling not to earth—as well we may
Trust Asia's serpent's wanton play,
That glitters only to betray
To death—or else to misery.

Dream not of Friendship—there may be
A word, a smile, a grasp for thee—
But wait the hour of need and see—
But wonder not their fallacy.

Think not of Beauty—like the rest
It wears a luster on its crest—
But short the time ere stands confest
Its falsehood; or its frailty.

Then cling no more so fondly on
The Flowers of earth around thee strewn,
They do a while to sport upon,
But not to love so fervently.

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